

## 9.17 Won't You Be My Neighbor?

the big idea:  
Living as God's  
Just People

Tim grabbed his lunch tray and sat down next to Eddie and Lara. Suddenly, students' cell phones started ringing, beeping, and humming. Another campus-wide text message had been sent. Students frantically checked their phones and immediately began to chatter.

"Looks like a juicy piece of gossip," Lara said, as she pulled out her cell phone. "Let's take a look."

Tim and Eddie leaned over to see the message. They couldn't believe what they read.

"Wow," Eddie said with a chuckle. "Shenora's pregnant. So much for her goody-goody church-girl image. I always knew she was a hypocrite."

"I bet it's Shawn's," Lara said. She quickly

forwarded the text to her friends. "They always seemed a little too hot and heavy. Guess that'll teach them."

Tim quietly picked at his mashed potatoes with his plastic fork.

Eddie noticed how quiet Tim had been. "What do you think about this, Tim?"

Tim looked up. "I don't really know. I mean, how do we even know if this text is true? And even if it is, that doesn't mean we should go around bashing Shenora and Shawn. That's not very neighborly."

"Neighborly? She doesn't live by you," Eddie said, looking confused.

"You know what I mean," Tim said, shaking his head.

### from your Bible

**Leviticus 19:9–18, 33–37, NIV**—"When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest.<sup>10</sup> Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.<sup>11</sup> "Do not steal. "Do not lie. "Do not deceive one another.<sup>12</sup> "Do not swear falsely by my name and so profane the name of your God. I am the

LORD.<sup>13</sup> "Do not defraud or rob your neighbor "Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight.<sup>14</sup> "Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but fear your God. I am the LORD.<sup>15</sup> "Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.<sup>16</sup> "Do not go about spreading slander among your people. "Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life. I am the LORD.<sup>17</sup> "Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in their

guilt. <sup>18</sup> “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

**19:33—** “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. <sup>34</sup> **The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in**

**Egypt. I am the LORD your God.** <sup>35</sup> “Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. <sup>36</sup> Use honest scales and honest weights, an honest ephah and an honest hin. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt. <sup>37</sup> “Keep all my decrees and all my laws and follow them. I am the LORD.”

## Scripture discussion

This week’s Scripture passage contains guidelines for living as just people. One of the most famous guidelines is found in Leviticus 19:18, “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people but love your neighbor as yourself ...” God wants His holiness to be reflected in the lives of His people. This includes what they say and do. Christians are constantly watched, and people are

waiting to see us make a mistake, which can hurt our testimony to others. That’s why it is important to study God’s Word and strive to live as just people.

These rules that God gives are meant to make us better people and better representatives of God. If we truly are Christians, we should strive to obey God and His commands. He knows what He is doing; He knows what is best for us. And our attitudes and actions have a direct impact on those around us and in the world.

## make it real



### check it

1. What became the topic of discussion at lunch?
2. Why was Tim upset about the text message?
3. What did Eddie and Lara do wrong in this situation?
4. How was Tim being a good neighbor?



### think it

1. Why are we to leave some of our “harvest” for the poor and needy (Leviticus 19:9–10)?
2. What types of good business practices are given in this passage (vv. 11, 13, 35–36)?
3. Who are considered to be our neighbors?



### do it

Back in the day, Mr. Rogers of “Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood” used to sing a song on his television show asking the viewers at home to “be his neighbors.” If you visit our Facebook page, you will see that we’ve posted this song. What do you think Mr. Rogers meant? Was his definition of “neighbor” different or similar to the one in today’s Scripture passage? Is everyone our neighbor? Share your thoughts and leave a comment under the video!




### keep it

**“The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God” (Leviticus 19:34, NIV).**

## 9.24 Be Grateful

the big idea: People Grumble



Kendall stared at her birthday cake with a blank look on her face as her family and friends sang happy birthday. Her parents noticed her discontentment and furrowed their brows. They didn't understand why she was upset. Once she blew out the candles and her aunt began to cut the cake and pass it around, Kendall's parents pulled her aside to speak with her in private.

"Kendall, honey what's wrong?" Dad asked.

"No girl should look this sad on her birthday," Mom added.

"What's wrong is this whole birthday party!" Kendall said standing in the corner with her arms crossed. "I asked for a tiara cake with white icing, the cake was square and yellow with chocolate frosting.

Kendall's eyes began to well up with tears, "I asked for gift cards, clothes, and purses, and so far, all I've gotten are a bunch of shower gel and lotion sets. I was very clear about what I wanted!"

Mom had heard enough, "The first thing I

want you to do is to calm down and watch your tone when you are speaking with us. The next thing I want you to do is count your blessings."

Dad, who had been standing there with his eyes wide open in shock, said, "Now Kendall, we've always taught you God first, then people, then other things. Take a look around! Grandma, all your uncles, aunts, cousins, and friends took time out of their day and traveled here just to celebrate you. They also thought so much of you as to bring you gifts."

Mom added, "And yes, we were going to get you that tiara cake but your grandmother, who hasn't baked in years, wanted to make you one of her prize-winning cakes. You're a young lady now you have to begin to take a closer look and be grateful for all the blessings that come your way!"

Kendall dried her eyes, as she thought about what her parents said. She went around to everyone at the party thanking them for coming and for the gifts they gave her, enjoyed a piece of cake, and played with her friends and cousins.

### from your Bible

**Numbers 11:1–6; 10–15, NIV**—Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. <sup>2</sup>When the people cried out to Moses, he prayed to the LORD and the fire died down. <sup>3</sup>So that place was called Taberah, because

fire from the LORD had burned among them. <sup>4</sup>**The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, "If only we had meat to eat! <sup>5</sup>We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic. <sup>6</sup>But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!"** <sup>10</sup> Moses heard the people of every family wailing at the entrance to their tents. The LORD became exceedingly angry, and

Moses was troubled. <sup>11</sup>He asked the LORD, “Why have you brought this trouble on your servant? What have I done to displease you that you put the burden of all these people on me? <sup>12</sup>Did I conceive all these people? Did I give them birth? Why do you tell me to carry them in my arms, as a nurse carries an infant, to the land you promised on oath

to their ancestors? <sup>13</sup>Where can I get meat for all these people? They keep wailing to me, ‘Give us meat to eat!’ <sup>14</sup>I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me. <sup>15</sup>If this is how you are going to treat me, please go ahead and kill me—if I have found favor in your eyes—and do not let me face my own ruin.”

## Scripture discussion

The Israelites had been enslaved in Egypt, and although life was hard, many of them had become used to living in slavery. Once they were free and struggling to live on their own, some of them wanted to return to slavery, so they could have what was familiar and what they con-

sidered comfortable. Moses had to work hard to encourage his people to continue to push forward to the greater reward of being free in their own land, and often they complained and struggled against him while he tried to move them into the promise God had given them. Often people prefer what is familiar even when it is not good for them because change and new things seem scary and too hard.

## make it real



### check it

1. Why was Kendall upset?
2. Kendall's dad taught her to put “God first, then people, then other things.” What do you think that means?
3. Did Kendall understand the advice that her parents gave her? How do you know?



### think it

1. What was the Lord's reaction to the people's complaints about their hardships? (Numbers 11:1)
2. What were some of the food the Israelites missed eating when they were in captivity? (vv.4–6)
3. What was the Lord's answer to the people's wailings for meat? (vv. 18–20)



### do it

Grumbling reveals a lack of faith and can lead to negativity and discontent. But God hears our cries and responds with grace, even when we are wrong to complain. This week, write down a list of all the new things you've received this year. When you finish, look at that list to see how many of those things you don't even pay attention to anymore. Do you even know where all of those things are? Then make a list of things you are thankful for that cannot be bought. Which list is more important to you? If you can, tell someone thank you for something nice they've done for you or something they've given you or write them a thank you note.



### keep it

**“The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, “If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic. But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!” (Numbers 11:4–6, NIV).**